

Finding the Needles in the Haystack: A Minimally Invasive Approach to Refining MIS Fellowship Selection

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Background

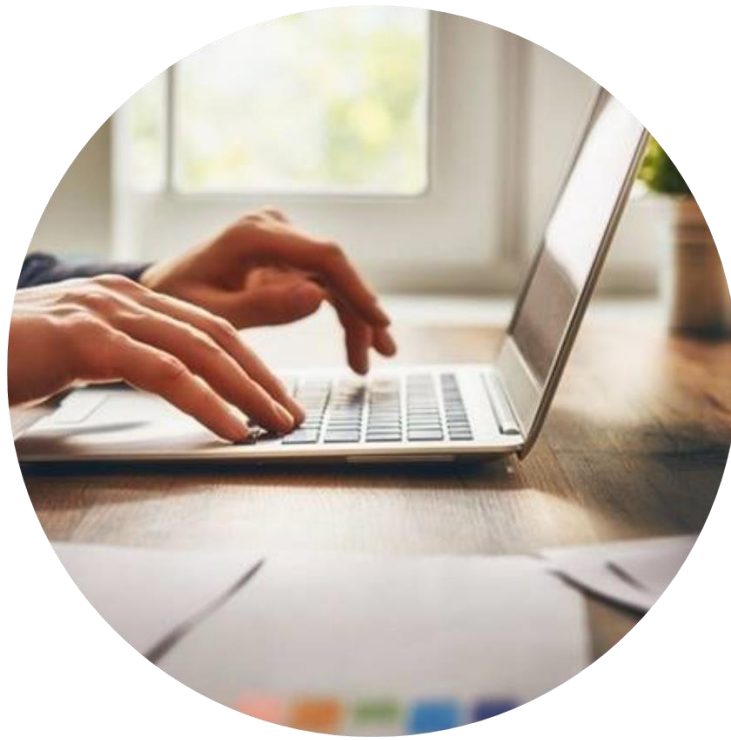
- MIS fellowships continue to face challenges with selecting incoming fellows
 - High volume of applicants
 - Lack of evidence-based assessments to capture applicant characteristics
 - Lack of clarity on the attributes required to be successful in a program
- Result is difficulty in selecting individuals who are a best fit for the program and who will thrive during their fellowship experience

Research Aim

The purpose of this study was to develop a competency-based approach that enhances objectivity and efficiency in fellow selection.

Methodology

- Over three consecutive application cycles (2016-2017, 2017-2018, 2018-2019) subject matter experts (SMEs) involved in the selection process for MIS fellows at a hospital located in the South-Central region of the US were invited to participate in on-site interviews, and complete online surveys to gain insight into their program.
- Qualitative data from the interviews and quantitative assessments were analyzed to incorporate into two online assessments for applicant screening: a personality assessment and custom situational judgement test (SJT).
- Applicants who performed well on these assessments were invited onsite and participated in structured interviews and a laparoscopic skills assessment (FLS).
- Performance on the new assessments and other application data (ABSITE, USMLE, procedural volume, residency program reputation via national rankings) were examined.
- Changes in interview volume and fellow performance were also investigated.



Results

- 176 applicants (90% of all applicants invited) completed the 42-minute assessment across the three-year period.
- No significant relationships emerged between the online assessment, technical skills assessment, or interview performance and any data in the application packet (ABSITE, USMLE, procedural volume, program reputation).
- 39 candidates were interviewed. 11 (28%) failed the technical skills assessment, despite being provided video preparation materials.
- In previous years the program would interview approximately 30 applicants each year; these numbers were reduced to an average of 13 interviewees per year (a 57% reduction), while maintaining high match rates.
- Preliminary performance data reveal that all MIS faculty (N=5) reported that the fellows selected with these new methodologies were more trainable, professional, technically proficient, and a better overall “fit” compared to prior fellows.



- ≠
- ABSITE
 - USMLE
 - Case volume
 - Residency reputation

28% (11/39) failed the technical skills assessment

“OLD vs. NEW”

• 30 Interviews / year

• 13 Interviews / year (↓ 57%)

- More...
 - Trainable
 - Professional
 - Technical
 - Better fit

BEFORE

AFTER

Conclusion

Current fellowship application packet information may not adequately provide programs with relevant candidate information desired and required among decision makers. Incorporation of additional screening tools can allow all candidates to be considered in an equitable and objective manner in comparison to pre-determined competencies, values, and fit. Further, this process can also enhance efficiency of the screening process by reducing the number of on-site interviews needed.